

## Message Text

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ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 L-03 H-02 DHA-02 SCA-01 /019 W

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P 181315Z DEC 75

FM AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 875

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

UNCLAS HERMOSILLO 401

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : CASC MX (SERRANO, STANLEY NEAL)

SUBJECT : W/W REVIEW CASES OF ALL AMCIT PRISONERS

REF: STATE 194199 & 230071

1. DENIAL OF CONSULAR ACCESS - PER POST FILES, SERRANO WAS ARRESTED IN CIUDAD OBREGON ON NOVEMBER 2, 1974 AND CONOFF LEARNED OF ARREST ON NOVEMBER 6, 1974 THROUGH LOCAL NEWSPAPERS. POST FILES DO NOT INDICATE SERRANO WAS VISITED IN CIUDAD OBREGON. SERRANO WAS TRANSFERRED TO HERMOSILLO IN MID-DECEMBER 1974. HE FIRST APPEARED FOR INTERVIEW AT THE MONTHLY VISIT OF MARCH 27, 1974.

2. ALLEGATION OF MISTREATMENT WHILE IN PRISON - PER POST FILES, SERRANO ALLEGED ON MARCH 27, 1974 THAT HE HAD BEEN TAKEN DOWNTOWN ON FRIDAY, MARCH 22, ALONG WITH TWO OTHER AMERICANS AND QUESTIONED ABOUT A FIRE AT THE PENITENTIARY UNTIL MONDAY MORNING WHEN THEY WERE RETURNED TO PRISON. HE ALLEGED THAT DURING THE INTERROGATION HE HAD BEEN BEATEN WITH FISTS WHILE HIS HANDS WERE CUFFED BEHIND HIS BACK, GIVEN ELECTRICAL SHOCKS, AND SUBJECT TO OTHER INDIGNITIES. CONOFF SENT A NOTE PROTESTING THIS TORTURE TO THE SONORA STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON MARCH 28, 1974. A FOLLOW-UP LETTER WAS SENT APRIL 10 AND A THIRD LETTER WAS SENT TO GOVERNOR OF SONORA ON APRIL 29 ADVISING HIM THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL HAD NOT RESPONDED TO LETTERS. ON MAY 2, ATTORNEY GENERAL RESPONDED TO PROTEST BY REJECTING ALL ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE AS FALSE. ADDITIONAL LETTERS RE-

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GARDING SAME GENERAL INCIDENT, INCLUDING MEDICAL REPORTS

CORROBORATING CLAIMS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE, WERE SENT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON MAY 17 AND JUNE 20; AND TO THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ON JULY 2, JULY 4, AND JULY 25. ON JULY 29, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR REPLIED SAYING HE HAD ASKED FOR AN INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. MEXICAN OFFICIALS CONTINUE TO DENY TORTURE OCCURRED AND NO FURTHER POST ACTION APPEARS FEASIBLE.

3. PROLONGED PRE-TRIAL DETENTION - PER POSH FILES, SERRANO TOLD CONOFF THAT HE HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH MURDER IN CONNECTION WITH THE MARCH PRISON FIRE THAT HAD KILLED SEVEN MEXICAN PRISONERS. CONOFF WROTE A LETTER ON AUGUST 1, 1974 TO MEXICAN JUDGE ASKING HIM TO EXPEDITE SERRANO'S DRUG CASE AND SERRANO WAS ACQUITTED OF THOSE CHARGES IN AUGUST 1974, EIGHT MONTHS AFTER ARREST. LAWYER ADVISED CONOFF ON DECEMBER 20, 1974 THAT THE DEFENSE STRATEGY ON THE MURDER CASE AGAINST SERRANO AND FOUR OTHER AMERICANS WAS TO DELIBERATELY SLOW DOWN THE TRIAL PROCESS TO ALLOW PUBLIC SENTIMENT ABOUT THE FIRE TO SETTLE DOWN. SERRANO APPEARS TO AGREE WITH THIS STRATEGY AND HAS NOT COMPLAINED ABOUT PROLONGED DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL RPT TRIAL.

4. THEFT OF MONEY - PER POST FILES, SERRANO COMPLAINED ON APRIL 22, 1974 THAT FELLOW PRISONERS HAD STOLEN 400 DOLLARS FROM HIM. ON FEBRUARY 25, 1975, SERRANO SAID HE HAS 150 DOLLARS IN MONEY ORDERS STOLEN. CONOFF SUGGESTED HE HAVE MONEY SENT IN CARE OF ATTORNEY FOR SAFER DELIVERY.

5. CONOFF VISITATION - PER POST FILES, SERRANO WAS NOT SEEN UNTIL FIVE MONTHS AFTER HIS ARREST. SINCE THAT TIME, SERRANO HAS BEEN VISITED FREQUENTLY AND WAS LAST SEEN ON OCTOBER 17, 1975.  
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